Production, demand, supply and import of cotton in the country

*251. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the total quantity of cotton, in bales, produced during this season in comparison to each of the last three years;

(b) the estimated total demand and supply of cotton, in bales, at present in the country;

(c) the total quantity of cotton, in bales, imported during the last season to meet the domestic demand;

(d) the rate of cotton and the total foreign exchange incurred thereon during the last season; and

(e) the steps taken by Government to import the cotton to meet the domestic demand?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RAN A): (a) Total quantity of cotton produced during 1997-98 to 2000-01 cotton season are as under:

Cotton Season (Oct.-Sept.)	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01 (estimated)
Production (in lakh bales of 170 kg each)	158	165	156	146

SOURCE: Cotton Advisory Board.

(b) During the current cotton season 2000-01, total availability of cotton is estimated at 186.50 lakh bales as against the estimated consumption of 171 lakh bales.

(c) Import of cotton during the cotton season 1999-2000 was 22.01 lakh bales.

(d) The price of cotton imported during 1999-2000 cotton

season varied from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 20,500 per bale and foreign exchange equivalent of Rs. 1700 crore (approx.) was incurred.

(e) The domestic availability of cotton is sufficient to meet the domestic demand. However, import of cotton is under OGL to enable the user industry to procure cotton of desired quality parameters.

Collapse of surface earth at Deolabeda Underground Colliery

*252. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any information about the collapse of surface earth at Deolabeda Underground Colliery area due to non-filling of adequate sand;

(b) whether it is a fact that there are many instances and complaints of collapse of surface earth in Talcher and IB Valley Collieries in the past; and

(c) if so, whether Government propose to enquire into the reasons and ensure action against the persons who are responsible for these mishaps?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Question does not arise.

Remote presence facilitation system at Qutab Minar

*253. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the tourists for the first time can enjoy the view from the top of the Qutab Minar without actually climbing up all the way, with remote presence facilitation system; and